

Docket No.: 2038-281Application No.: 09/990,263**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-3. *(cancelled)*

4. **(currently amended)** A disposable undergarment, comprising:

a front waist region, a rear waist region and a crotch region extending longitudinally of said undergarment between the front and rear waist regions, said crotch region having transversely opposite side edges curving inward transversely of said undergarment to define peripheral edges of leg-openings of said undergarment;

first and second elastic members each including opposite end portions and a middle portion disposed between and connecting the end portions;

each of the end portions of the first elastic member extending along a front end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the first elastic member extending across said crotch region;

each of the end portions of the second elastic member extending along a rear end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the second elastic member extending across said crotch region;

the first and second elastic members being completely spaced apart in a longitudinal direction of said undergarment without contacting or crossing each other;

a pair of third elastic members each extending along one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region and curving inward transversely of said undergarment;

each of said third elastic members having a front portion extending alongside at least a part

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of one of the end portions of the first elastic member, and a rear portion extending alongside at least a part of one of the end portions of the second elastic member;

wherein a tensile stress of overlapping zones in which the front and rear portions of said third elastic members extend alongside the respective end portions of said first and second elastic members is higher than that of non-overlapping zones in which said first, second and third elastic members do not extend alongside each other;

said [[The]] disposable undergarment further according to claim 2, further comprising:

a liquid-absorbent panel including a liquid-absorbent core disposed between a liquid-pervious topsheet and a leak-barrier sheet; and

a liquid-impervious backsheet;

said panel being joined to said backsheet with said leak-barrier sheet lying between the backsheet and the core;

said first and second elastic members being attached to said backsheet; and

said third elastic members being attached to transversely opposite side edge portions of said panel extending along said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region.

5-6. (canceled)

7. (previously presented) The undergarment according to claim 4, wherein an entire area of said topsheet is smaller than that of said backsheet.

8. (previously presented) The undergarment according to claim 7, wherein said third elastic members terminate at an edge of said topsheet.

9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended) A disposable undergarment, comprising:

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a front waist region, a rear waist region and a crotch region extending longitudinally of said undergarment between the front and rear waist regions, said crotch region having transversely opposite side edges curving inward transversely of said undergarment to define peripheral edges of leg-openings of said undergarment;

first and second elastic members each including opposite end portions and a middle portion disposed between and connecting the end portions;

each of the end portions of the first elastic member extending along a front end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the first elastic member extending across said crotch region;

each of the end portions of the second elastic member extending along a rear end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the second elastic member extending across said crotch region;

the first and second elastic members being completely spaced apart in a longitudinal direction of said undergarment without contacting or crossing each other;

a pair of third elastic members each extending along one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region and curving inward transversely of said undergarment;

each of said third elastic members having a front portion extending alongside at least a part of one of the end portions of the first elastic member, and a rear portion extending alongside at least a part of one of the end portions of the second elastic member;

wherein a tensile stress of overlapping zones in which the front and rear portions of said third elastic members extend alongside the respective end portions of said first and second elastic members is higher than that of non-overlapping zones in which said first, second and third elastic members do not extend alongside each other; and

wherein ~~The undergarment according to claim 2,~~ wherein said backsheet has at least two material layers including an upper layer and a lower layer, said first and second elastic members are sandwiched between said upper and lower layers, and said third elastic members are sandwiched between said upper layer and said topsheet.

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11. *(canceled)*

12. **(currently amended)** A disposable undergarment, comprising:

a front waist region, a rear waist region and a crotch region extending longitudinally of said undergarment between the front and rear waist regions, said crotch region having transversely opposite side edges curving inward transversely of said undergarment to define peripheral edges of leg-openings of said undergarment;

first and second elastic members each including opposite end portions and a middle portion disposed between and connecting the end portions;

each of the end portions of the first elastic member extending along a front end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the first elastic member extending across said crotch region;

each of the end portions of the second elastic member extending along a rear end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the second elastic member extending across said crotch region;

the first and second elastic members being completely spaced apart in a longitudinal direction of said undergarment without contacting or crossing each other;

a pair of third elastic members each extending along one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region and curving inward transversely of said undergarment;

each of said third elastic members having a front portion extending alongside at least a part of one of the end portions of the first elastic member, and a rear portion extending alongside at least a part of one of the end portions of the second elastic member;

wherein a tensile stress of overlapping zones in which the front and rear portions of said third elastic members extend alongside the respective end portions of said first and second elastic members is higher than that of non-overlapping zones in which said first, second and third elastic members do not extend alongside each other; and

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wherein ~~The undergarment according to claim 2,~~ wherein each of said third elastic members extends alongside an entirety of each of the respective end portions of said first and second elastic members.

13. *(canceled)*

14. *(currently amended)* A disposable undergarment, comprising:

a front waist region, a rear waist region and a crotch region extending longitudinally of said undergarment between the front and rear waist regions, said crotch region having transversely opposite side edges curving inward transversely of said undergarment to define peripheral edges of leg-openings of said undergarment;

first and second elastic members each including opposite end portions and a middle portion disposed between and connecting the end portions;

each of the end portions of the first elastic member extending along a front end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the first elastic member extending across said crotch region;

each of the end portions of the second elastic member extending along a rear end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the second elastic member extending across said crotch region;

the first and second elastic members being completely spaced apart in a longitudinal direction of said undergarment without contacting or crossing each other;

a pair of third elastic members each extending along one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region and curving inward transversely of said undergarment;

each of said third elastic members having a front portion extending alongside at least a part of one of the end portions of the first elastic member, and a rear portion extending alongside at least a part of one of the end portions of the second elastic member;

wherein a tensile stress of overlapping zones in which the front and rear portions of said

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third elastic members extend alongside the respective end portions of said first and second elastic members is higher than that of non-overlapping zones in which said first, second and third elastic members do not extend alongside each other; and

wherein ~~The undergarment according to claim 2, wherein~~ at least one of said first and second elastic members includes a plurality of stretchable strands extending in parallel, and at least one of the front and rear portions of said third elastic members terminate at a point located between adjacent said strands.

15. *(canceled)*

16. **(currently amended)** A disposable undergarment, comprising:

a front waist region, a rear waist region and a crotch region extending longitudinally of said undergarment between the front and rear waist regions, said crotch region having transversely opposite side edges curving inward transversely of said undergarment to define peripheral edges of leg-openings of said undergarment;

first and second elastic members each including opposite end portions and a middle portion disposed between and connecting the end portions;

each of the end portions of the first elastic member extending along a front end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the first elastic member extending across said crotch region;

each of the end portions of the second elastic member extending along a rear end portion of one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region, the middle portion of the second elastic member extending across said crotch region;

the first and second elastic members being completely spaced apart in a longitudinal direction of said undergarment without contacting or crossing each other;

a pair of third elastic members each extending along one of said transversely opposite side edges of said crotch region and curving inward transversely of said undergarment;

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each of said third elastic members having a front portion extending alongside at least a part of one of the end portions of the first elastic member, and a rear portion extending alongside at least a part of one of the end portions of the second elastic member;

wherein a tensile stress of overlapping zones in which the front and rear portions of said third elastic members extend alongside the respective end portions of said first and second elastic members is higher than that of non-overlapping zones in which said first, second and third elastic members do not extend alongside each other;

said disposable undergarment further comprising a liquid-pervious topsheet, a liquid-impervious backsheet and a liquid-absorbent core disposed between the topsheet and backsheet, wherein ~~The undergarment according to claim 3, wherein~~

said core includes a front end zone, a rear end zone, and a middle zone extending longitudinally of said undergarment between the front and rear end zones, said middle zone being completely located in said crotch region, said front end zone extending from said middle zone toward said front waist region, and said rear end zone extending from said middle zone toward said rear waist region; and

the middle portions of said first and second elastic members underlie the front and rear end zones of said core, respectively.

17. (canceled)